

Article 49H.

Production, Sale, and Transportation of Farmed Cervids.

§ 106-549.97. Regulation by Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services of farmed cervids produced and sold for commercial purposes; definitions.

(a) Repealed by Session Laws 2015-263, s. 14(a), effective September 30, 2015.

(a1) The following definitions apply in this Article:

- (1) Commission. – The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission.
- (2) Department. – The North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.
- (3) Farmed Cervid. – Any cervid, as defined by the USDA Standards, that is susceptible to Chronic Wasting Disease, or any other member of the Cervidae family that is not susceptible to Chronic Wasting Disease, that is held in captivity and produced, bought, or sold for commercial purposes. With regard to cervids that are susceptible to Chronic Wasting Disease, the term "farmed cervid" shall only include any cervid that was bred in captivity and has been continuously maintained within a herd that is enrolled in and complies with a USDA-approved Herd Certification Program. Any animal registered or tagged in any licensed captive cervid facility existing within the State as of July 1, 2015, is deemed to be a farmed cervid.
- (4) Non-Farmed Cervid. – All animals in the family Cervidae other than farmed cervids.
- (5) USDA. – The United States Department of Agriculture.
- (6) USDA Standards. – The United States Department of Agriculture's Chronic Wasting Disease Program Standards, May 2014 edition, and subsequent updates.

(a2) The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall regulate the production, sale, possession, and transportation, including importation and exportation, of farmed cervids. The Department shall have sole authority with regard to farmed cervids, including administration of the North Carolina Captive Cervid Herd Certification Program. The Department shall allow the sale of farmed cervids, whether alive or dead, whole or in part, including, but not limited to, the sale of antlers, antler velvet, hides, or meat from captive populations of farmed cervids. The Department shall follow the USDA Standards and the provisions set forth in 9 C.F.R. Part 55 and 9 C.F.R. Part 81 in the implementation of this Article with regard to cervids susceptible to Chronic Wasting Disease. The Department may adopt rules to implement this Article, including, but not limited to, requirements for captivity licenses, captivity permits, transportation permits, importation permits, and exportation permits. The Department may issue new captivity licenses or permits for farmed cervid facilities that will hold cervids susceptible to Chronic Wasting Disease only if Chronic Wasting Disease-susceptible source animals are from a certified herd in accordance with USDA Standards from an existing licensed facility. Nothing in this section shall limit the Department's ability to issue new captivity licenses and permits for farmed cervid facilities that will hold cervids that are not susceptible to Chronic Wasting Disease. The Department shall not issue an importation permit for any farmed cervid from a Chronic Wasting Disease-positive, exposed, or suspect farmed cervid facility. Until such time as the USDA has adopted an approved method of testing for Chronic Wasting Disease in living cervids, cervids susceptible to Chronic Wasting Disease shall not be imported into North Carolina.

(a3) All free-ranging cervids shall be removed from any new captive cervid facility prior to stocking the facility with farmed cervids.

(a4) Hunt facilities as defined by USDA Standards are prohibited. Any farmed cervid killed on the premises of a licensed facility shall be killed only by the licensee, the owner of the facility, an employee of the facility, or a qualified veterinarian administering euthanasia.

(a5) The Department and the Commission may develop a Memorandum of Agreement authorizing joint enforcement activities. The Memorandum of Agreement may allow for enforcement activities by the Commission on captive cervid facilities in instances of illegal importation. The Memorandum of Agreement may also provide for additional enforcement activities by the Commission on captive cervid facilities where appropriate as requested by the Department.

(b) The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission shall regulate the possession and transportation, including importation and exportation, of non-farmed cervids pursuant to G.S. 113-272.6. No action taken by the Department shall in any way limit the authority of the Commission to regulate non-farmed cervids as wildlife resources of the State belonging to the people of the State as a whole. Nothing in this Article shall authorize the Department to regulate hunting or any activity related to hunting.

(c) Repealed by Session Laws 2015-263, s. 14(a), effective September 30, 2015.

(d) No county, municipality, or any other unit of local government may adopt any ordinance, regulation, or law that is inconsistent with or more restrictive than the provisions of this Article. Any ordinance, regulation, or law that is currently enacted that is inconsistent with or more restrictive than the provisions of this Article is hereby repealed.

(e) In order to carry out the authority granted by this Article, the Department may enforce the rules adopted by the Wildlife Resources Commission under its prior authority pursuant to G.S. 150B-21.7, including the rules governing issuance of captivity licenses, captivity permits, transportation permits, importation permits, and exportation permits, until such time as the Department adopts rules for the implementation of this Article.

(f) The provisions of G.S. 113-129 shall not apply to the production, sale, transportation, importation, or exportation of farmed cervids under this Article, whether alive or dead, whole or in part.

(g) No live farmed cervid shall be transported on a public road within the State unless the cervid has an official form of identification approved by the State Veterinarian for this purpose and the appropriate transportation, importation, or exportation permit issued by the Department.

(h) Any live farmed cervid that is transported on a public road within the State shall be subject to inspection by a wildlife law enforcement officer to ensure that each farmed cervid has official identification required under this Article and that the appropriate permit has been obtained from the Department.

(i) Any person transporting a live farmed cervid on a public road within the State without the appropriate farmed cervid identification and permit may be subject to a civil penalty by the Department under this Article. Each cervid that fails to meet the tagging and transportation requirements of the Department shall constitute a separate violation.

(j) The Commissioner of Agriculture may assess a civil penalty of not more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000) per animal against any person who violates a provision of this Article or any rule adopted thereunder. In determining the amount of the penalty, the Commissioner shall consider the degree and extent of harm caused by the violation. The clear proceeds of civil penalties assessed pursuant to this section shall be remitted to the Civil Penalty and Forfeiture Fund in accordance with G.S. 115C-457.2. (1991, c. 317, s. 1; 1997-142, s. 1; 1997-261, s. 109; 2003-344, s. 11; 2015-263, s. 14(a).)